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Rural District of Lanchester

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

**Medical Officer of Health
for the Year 1948**

JOHN G. WALKER,

M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

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MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE,
1948.

Chairman : Councillor Miss E. E. Allport.

Vice-Chairman : Councillor M. Appleby,

and

All Members of the Council.

Medical Officer of Health and Sanitary Inspectors,
Health Department, Council Offices,
Lanchester.

Telephones—Lanchester 4 and 5.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF LANCHESTER
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman, Miss Allport and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting my annual report on the health and sanitary circumstances of Lanchester Rural District for 1948. This is my 24th annual report and one of the greatest changes in the health services occurred during this year. The National Health Service Act became operative on July 5th, 1948. It is too early yet to say how this will ultimately work out but so far as can be seen it seems to be operating in this area as well as can be expected so soon after such a great change. Difficulties are gradually being smoothed out.

The year under review has been a reasonably good one as far as vital statistics show, which will be seen in the following pages.

I take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the staff of the Health Department, to your officers in other departments and to the Chairman and Members of the Council for their interest in and support for public health matters during the year.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

JOHN G. WALKER, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,
Medical Officer of Health.



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LANCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the year 1948.

Summary of General and Vital Statistics.

Area in acres	...	...	...	...	...	...	44,243
Population (Census 1931)	...	...	...	...	...	...	16,413
Population (Mid-year 1948)	...	...	...	...	...	...	15,310
Number of inhabited houses according to rate books	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,260
Reduced rateable value	...	...	...	...	...	...	£69,940
Sum represented by a penny rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	£258-16-1
Births during the year	...	...	...	...	...	...	284
Birthrate	...	...	...	...	...	...	18.5
Deaths during the year	...	...	...	...	...	...	155
Deathrate (Crude)	...	...	...	...	...	...	10.1
Infantile Mortality Rate	...	...	...	...	...	...	45.7
Tuberculosis Deathrate	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.52
Pulmonary Tuberculosis Deathrate	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.32
Non-Pulmonary Tuberculosis Deathrate	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.19
Zymotic Deathrate	...	...	...	...	...	...	0.13

Special Causes of Sickness.

There were no special causes of sickness during the year.

LANCHESTER RURAL DISTRICT.

The present district came into being on April 1st, 1937, as the result of the review of County Districts under the Local Government Act of 1929. It now consists of the parishes of Cornsay, Esh, Greencroft, Healeyfield, Hedley Hope, Lanchester, Langley, Muggleswick and Satley. Nine parishes as compared with 13 before the review order.

The district as we now know it covers an area of 44,243 acres, many of which are purely agricultural and devoted to dairy farming.

There are small urbanised areas such as Burnhope, Langley Park and Cornsay Colliery, really developed around collieries and Lanchester village itself, one of the prettiest in the County, which is the intersecting point of all traffic north, south and east and west.

The local authority headquarters are there, as are also the police court, Ministry of Labour and National Service and other departments, and it forms a natural hub for the area. There is the busy cattle mart in the village, and in recent years two new industries have been introduced. One, a firm manufacturing toilet products and the other a firm manufacturing clothing.

Efforts are being made to attract other industries to the area. Lanchester has been a centre of local government since the establishment of the Poor Law Union as far as modern days go and in earlier times was a centre of local administration during the Roman occupation of Britain as the Roman Camp and other historical remains show.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS AND INDUSTRIES.

The chief industries are coal mining, coke making, brick and tile making, quarrying and a large amount of dairy farming.

SPECIAL CAUSES OF SICKNESS, EFFECTS OF OCCUPATION, ETC.

There does not appear to be any detrimental effect on the health of the population by reason of these industries. Scarlet fever, measles and whooping cough were more prevalent than usual during the year under review. There is no statistical evidence to show that food rationing has adversely affected the health of the population. On the contrary infants and young children certainly look and are in better health than at any time I have observed. The supply of vitamins and milk foods at the welfare centres can certainly claim a large share of the credit for this improvement.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		Total.	M.	F.	
Live	Legitimate	277	138	139	Birthrate per 1,000 of the estimated resident population—18.5.
Births	Illegitimate	7	5	2	
	Totals	284	143	141	
Still	Legitimate	11	6	5	Rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births— 37.2
Births	Illegitimate	—	—	—	
	Total	11	6	5	

	Total	M.	F.	
Deaths from all causes	155	80	75	Deathrate per 1,000 of estimated resident population—10.1

Deaths from Puerperal Causes :—

No. 29 Puerperal Sepsis	...	...	...	Nil.
No. 30 Other Puerperal Causes		...	...	Nil.

Deathrate of Infants under one year of age :—

All infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	45.7
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births	...	...	...	46.9
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births	...	...	...	Nil.
Deaths from Cancer (All ages)	...	...	...	28.0
Deaths from Measles	...	...	...	1.0
Deaths from Whooping Cough	...	...	...	Nil.
Deaths from Diarrhoea (Under two years)	...	...	...	2.0
Population estimated by Registrar General	...	...	...	15,310

POPULATION.

The Registrar General's estimate of the population at mid-year 1948 is 15,310. This is an increase of 730 on last year's figure. The population at the 1931 Census was 16,413, the figures for the last 10 years are given in the following table :—

Year	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Population	15,440	15,080	14,690	14,170	13,850	13,850	14,000	14,490	14,580	15,310

BIRTHS, BIRTHRATE, ETC.

The birthrate was lower than in 1947. It was 18.5 per thousand of the population compared with 17.9 for England and Wales and 19.2 for 148 smaller towns having a population of 25,000 to 50,000. The rate for the Administrative County was 20.4. The figures for the last 10 years are given in the following table.

Year	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Births	214	226	251	236	262	285	262	259	294	284
Rate	14.2	14.9	17.0	16.6	18.9	20.5	18.7	17.8	20.0	18.5

SEX DISTRIBUTION OF BIRTHS.

These were almost equal, there being 138 males and 139 females. The ratio being 1,000 males to 1,007 females.

DEATHS, DEATHRATE, ETC.

There were 155 deaths in 1948, being 17 less than the 172 of last year. The rate was 10.1 per thousand population. The rate for England and Wales was 10.8, whilst that for 148 smaller towns was 10.7. The rate for the Administrative County was 10.9. The number of deaths and the rates for the last ten years is given in the following table :—

Year	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Deaths	178	176	176	176	174	153	159	158	172	155
Death-rate	11.4	11.6	11.9	12.4	12.5	11.0	11.3	10.9	11.7	10.1

CAUSES OF DEATH.

The causes of death are set out in the following table which has been extended to cover the last 10 years. As far as 1948 is concerned it will be noted that five per cent of the deaths were due to birth injuries, whilst violent causes accounted for another two per cent. Tuberculosis was responsible for five per cent and cancer for eighteen per cent. The chest diseases—bronchitis and pneumonia ten per cent and inter cranial vascular lesions caused fourteen per cent. We get higher figures in respect of heart disease which gave a figure of 25.5 per cent, but it must be remembered that this is often given as a terminal cause of death in very elderly people.

CAUSES OF DEATH.		1948		1947		1946		1945		1944		1943		1942		1941		1940		1939	
		M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
All Causes	...	80	75	99	73	88	70	69	90	90	63	94	80	93	83	98	78	99	77	100	78
1. Typhoid and Para-Typhoid Fevers	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2. Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
3. Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
4. Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
5. Diphtheria	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
6. Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	2	3	1	1	2	1	2	2	4	2	5	2	4	1	5	2	4	1	4	3
7. Other forms of Tuberculosis	...	2	1	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	...	2	...
8. Syphilitic Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
9. Influenza	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
10. Measles	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
11. Acute Poliomyelitis and Polio-encephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
12. Acute Infective Encephalitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
13. Cancer of Buccal Cavity	...	...	...	1	...	3	...	...	...	2	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
14. Cancer of Uterus	...	...	2	5	4	...	3	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
15. Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	...	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
16. Cancer of Breast	...	...	3	8	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
17. Cancer of all other sites	...	10	10	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
18. Diabetes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
19. Inter Cranial Vascular Lesions	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
20. Heart Disease	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
21. Other diseases of Circulatory System	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
22. Bronchitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
23. Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
24. Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
25. Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
26. Diarrhoea (Under two years)	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
27. Appendicitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
28. Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
29. Nephritis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
30. Puerperal and post abortion sepsis	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
31. Other maternal causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
32. Premature Birth	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
33. Congenital Malformity, Birth injuries, etc.	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
34. Suicide	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
35. Road Traffic Accidents	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
36. Other violent causes	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
All other causes	...	10	4	8	7	11	5	9	9	9	5	10	4	8	6	11	7	9	6	10	9

ZYMOTIC DEATHRATE.

There were 3 deaths from the principal infectious diseases, which is 2 more than last year. Two of these were due to diarrhoea and 1 was due to measles. This gives a low zymotic deathrate of 0.13. The rate for the Administrative County was 0.09. The rates for the last 10 years are shown in the following table :—

Year.	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Deaths	—	1	1	—	2	3	3	—	1	3
Rate	—	0.06	0.06	—	0.14	0.21	0.21	—	0.06	0.13

MATERNAL MORTALITY.

Fortunately there were no deaths from puerperal causes during 1948. This gives a nil maternal mortality rate which is very satisfactory. The rate for the administrative County which is the lowest on record was 1.24. The rates in Lanchester Rural District for the last ten years are shown in the following table. These rates are per 1,000 total births (i.e., live and still) :—

Year	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Deaths	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	1	—	—
Rate	—	—	3.9	—	4.0	—	3.7	3.7	—	—

INFANT MORTALITY RATE.

There were 13 deaths in infants under 1 year of age, compared with 9 last year. This gives an infant mortality rate of 45 which is high compared with 34 for England and Wales and 32 for 148 smaller towns. The rate for the Administrative County was 39, which is the lowest on record. The table which follows gives the number of deaths and infant mortality rate for the last 10 years :—

Year	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Deaths	6	13	17	14	16	18	16	11	9	13
Rate	28	57	66	59	61	63	61	42	30	45

The causes of death in these children are shown in the following table.

Cause of Death.				Age.
Acute Bronchitis	...	...	...	1 month.
Atelectasis	...	...	...	Under 1 month.
Cerebral Haemorrhage	...	...	...	Under 1 month.
Acute Bronchial Pneumonia	...	...	...	1 month.
Gastro-Enteritis	...	...	...	5 months.
Gastro-Enteritis	...	...	...	4 months.
Toxaemia & Pneumonia	...	...	...	3 months.
Haemorrhage	...	...	...	Under 1 month.
Debility	...	...	...	Under 1 month.
Lobar Pneumonia	...	...	...	1 month.
Prematurity	...	...	...	Under 1 month.
Prematurity	...	...	...	Under 1 month.
Measles	...	...	...	5 months.

Total :—13 Deaths Under 1 Year of Age.

STILL BIRTHS.

There were 11 still births during 1948 compared with only 5 last year. All these were legitimate births. This gives a rate of 0.71 per 1,000 population which is higher than that of 0.43 for 148 smaller towns. The rate for England & Wales was 0.42 per 1,000 of the population. The following table gives the rates for the last 10 years and is shown per 1,000 population and per 1,000 births :—

Year	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Still Births	8	9	5	11	4	11	4	10	5	11
Per 1,000 Population	0.51	0.59	0.34	0.77	0.29	0.79	0.28	0.69	0.34	0.71
Per 1,000 births	36.0	38.3	19.5	48.3	15.0	43.6	18.7	37.1	20.0	37.2

CANCER MORTALITY.

There were 28 deaths from cancer during 1948, 12 males and 16 females. The number of deaths from this cause and the sex is given in the following table which covers the last 10 years.

Year	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948
Males	11	7	11	13	12	11	8	16	14	12
Females	7	7	7	12	9	13	13	10	11	16
Total	18	14	18	25	21	24	21	26	25	28

Cancer Deaths during 1948.

SITE OF DISEASE ACCORDING TO SEX.

MALE.					FEMALE.				
Colon	...	...	...	1	Colon	...	...	...	1
Rectum	...	...	...	3	Uterus	...	...	...	2
Stomach	...	...	...	2	Stomach	...	...	...	1
Pancreas	...	...	...	1	Breast	...	...	...	4
Bronchus	...	...	...	3	Lungs	...	...	...	2
Prostate	...	...	...	1	Liver	...	...	...	1
Oesophagus	...	...	...	1	Cervix	...	...	...	1
					Ovary	...	...	...	1
					Cervical Glands	...	...	...	1
					Other Sites	...	...	...	2
Total ...					Total ...				
12					16				

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

STAFF OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

(a) Medical Officer of Health :—

JOHN G. WALKER, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

Offices and duties :—Whole-time Medical Officer of Health for the Joint Areas of the Consett Urban and Lanchester Rural District Councils, in accordance with the Memorandum on the duties of Medical Officers of Health and the Sanitary Officers Order 1935.

(b) Sanitary Inspectors :—

G. ROWE, Cert. S.I.B., and Meat Inspectors Certificate
(Senior Inspector).

F. E. TERRY, Cert. S.I.B., and Meat Inspectors Certificate.

50% of the above Officers' Salaries are payable from County Funds.

(c) Clerk :—K. ROBERTSHAW.

LABORATORY FACILITIES.

A scheme is in operation where specimens of pathological material can be examined for public health officers or medical practitioners at the Central Laboratory, Government Buildings, Ponteland Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 5, telephone No. Kenton 69319. Your Medical Officer of Health is available to assist in such matters with advice as to methods of collection, dispatch, etc. Water samples are sent to the above laboratories for bacteriological examination and to the County Public Analyst in other cases.

SERVICES IN THE AREA PROVIDED BY DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL.

Assistance with enquiries regarding these services will be furnished at the Public Health Department, Council Offices, Lanchester on request.

MATERNITY & CHILD WELFARE CENTRES.

Langley Park	—	Alternate Thursdays ; Morning—Child Welfare ; Afternoon—Ante-Natal.
Lanchester	—	Alternate Mondays : Morning—Ante-Natal ; Afternoon—Child Welfare.
Burnhope	—	Alternate Tuesdays : Morning—Ante-Natal ; Afternoon—Child Welfare.
Cornsay Colliery & Esh Winning.		At Esh Winning Clinic, Wednesdays alternate weeks—Ante-Natal and Child Welfare.

CONVALESCENT HOME.

E. F. Peile County Convalescent Home, Shotley Bridge, telephone, Shotley Bridge 27, admits nursing mothers with their babies and children under 5 years of age.

COUNTY MIDWIFERY SERVICES.

A domiciliary midwifery service is provided. The names and addresses of the midwives available can be obtained from the Maternity and Child Welfare Centres, Health Visitors or from the County Medical Officer.

HOME HELPS.

The services of home helps are provided in necessitous cases during the laying-in period of the mother. Particulars can be obtained from Health Visitors, Welfare Centres or the County Medical Officer.

TUBERCULOSIS CARE AND AFTER CARE COMMITTEE.

The Committee is composed of voluntary workers, the work is varied and includes the provision in necessitous cases of beds, bedding, clothing and extra nourishment. Patients are assisted as far as possible to obtain better housing accommodation, in some cases by means of grant for rent assistance. The Secretary, Tuberculosis Care and After Care Committee—Mr. J. Curry, Health Department, Shire Hall, Durham, will deal with enquiries.

WELFARE OF THE BLIND.

The County scheme includes education of blind children, training of approved workers, treatment for prevention of blindness, etc. Information regarding the services can be obtained from the County Medical Officer or from Miss K. A. J. Robson, 8, St. Andrews Gardens, Blackhill.

CARE OF THE MENTALLY DEFECTIVE.

Parents or relatives in charge of children or young adults who are mentally retarded or undeveloped are invited to communicate with the County Medical Officer or the district Health Visitors.

SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICES.

The scheme provides for the systematic inspection of school children and for medical treatment of defects discovered. Sessions are held at the School Clinic, Consett, and at Durham City.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

Applications for this service, which is free, should be made either to the County Medical Officer, Shire Hall, Durham, or to the District Medical Officer of Health, Council Offices, Lanchester, when arrangements will be made to perform this service.

HOSPITALS SERVING THE DISTRICT.

These are now under the control of the Durham Hospital Management Committee. Enquiries should be made of your own Doctor. The Hospitals in this group are—Durham County, Earls House Sanatorium, Croxdale Maternity Home, Chester-le-Street Isolation, Dryburn, Crossgate, Chester-le-Street Relton, Brandon Isolation. Hospitals under Care and Maintenance are Langley Park Isolation, Gilesgate, Shincliffe Smallpox, Houghall Isolation, Blackfell Smallpox.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

Since July 5th, 1948, the local health authority has provided a 24 hour ambulance service from the local headquarters :—

- (1) Dryburn Hospital, telephone 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Durham 587.
5 p.m. to 9 a.m. Durham 720.
- (2) For Healeyfield and Muggleswick Parishes the local headquarters are Villa Real Hospital, Consett, Telephone day and night, Consett 411.

These services after initial troubles have now got down to smooth working and appear to meet the needs of the district adequately.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

WATER SUPPLY.

During the year, there was some inconvenience to householders in Burnhope at the higher end of the village through inadequate mains supply. However, with the commissioning of the boosting station at Crookhall, and the auxiliary mains from Rowley to Annfield Plain, it would appear that the Burnhope storage reservoir is being better served, since there have been no further complaints of the shortage of supply to the properties mentioned.

One small-holding at Oliverford abandoned an unsatisfactory spring supply and took a mains supply from the new Water Board main from Rowley.

Two private schemes associated with dairy farms were completed during the year at Springwell Farm, Butsfield, and Chiney Hall Farm, Rowley, respectively. These schemes comprised the protection, collection, pumping and storage of approved spring supplies to provide for a piped supply on tap, as against the previous laborious method of carting water for domestic and stock needs.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following table gives brief details of the visits made, and variety of work performed during the year.

	Meat and Other Food Inspections and Slaughter Houses.	Meat and Other Food Shops.	Housing.	Vermious Premises.	Drainage.	Refuse Removal and Salvage.	Refuse Tips.	Sanitary Accommodation.	Conversions.	I.D. Investigation.	Farms and Cowsheds.	Milk Samples.	Milk Shops.	Factories.	Ice-Cream.	Water Supplies.	Vermim.	Other Matters.	TOTAL.
Burnhope. Peartree. Holnside.	3	—	104	14	16	30	25	19	35	5	4	—	—	—	—	5	2	3	265
Lanchester—Malton. Greencroft. Maiden Law.	2	1	233	7	66	40	20	10	7	15	5	1	1	14	3	6	18	19	468
Cornsay—Quebec. Hamsteels. Hedleyhope & Hedleyhill.	7	—	233	4	41	39	22	15	5	11	10	—	1	1	1	5	10	37	442
Esh Colliery	—	—	12	—	6	70	3	—	12	—	4	—	1	—	—	—	—	1	109
Langley Park. Esh Village & Hill Top.	42	34	346	18	26	117	15	19	13	5	14	—	—	5	1	2	13	22	692
Satley & Butsfield	1	1	24	—	3	8	—	—	—	1	12	—	—	—	—	17	—	2	69
Castleside. Rowley & Knitsley.	—	1	104	11	18	29	16	7	4	8	12	2	—	13	—	10	—	4	239
Muggleswick & Wakerley	—	—	16	2	5	48	3	—	—	1	9	1	—	4	—	5	—	1	95
	55	37	1072	56	181	381	104	70	76	46	70	4	3	37	5	50	43	89	2379

DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE.

No works of major importance were undertaken during the year to sewers or sewage works.

Three isolated premises, namely, Peth, Summerhill and Mawsfield Farms, were connected to Council sewers, the former two through the medium of a sewer extension made possible by the new Lanchester housing scheme. In each case a previously unsatisfactory drainage and disposal arrangement was abolished.

At Dene Bridge House, Rowley, a drainage scheme was provided by means of a septic tank and filter.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.

At Burnhope, 11 houses in Fell Row and 5 in Office Row, had the conservancy system of ash-closets replaced by conversion into W.Cs.

At Esh Colliery work was commenced on 66 houses in December to replace the ash-closets with W.Cs.

Individual conversions of privy ash-pits were carried out at the following premises :—

Peth Farm, Summerhill, and the School House, Burnhope.

Conversions of ash-closets were effected at the following premises :—

Colepike Farm, Wallnook Farm, Mawsfield Farm and East Hedleyhope School (7).

New houses erected and occupied provided an additional 141 W.Cs, while the closure of 10 unfit houses at Happyland and 3 at Stratford Cottages, Greencroft, eliminated 13 ash-closets.

The closure of 8 unfit houses in Dormand's Cottages, deleted 8 W.Cs.

The revised figures of sanitary accommodation in the area are :—

Water Closets	...	...	3,512
Ash Closets	...	...	662
Pail Closets	...	...	15
Privy Ash-Pits	...	...	274
Privies	...	...	74
Chemical Closets	...	...	3

	Informal Notices.	Formal Notices.	Nuisances Abated.
Foul Conditions	18	—	18
Structural Defects	1352	—	806
Overcrowding	16	—	8
Dairies and Milk Shops	9	—	6
Cowsheds	25	—	19
Bakehouses	4	—	3
Slaughterhouses	—	—	—
Ashpits and Privies	170	—	69
Deposits of Refuse & Manure ...	137	—	137
Water Closets	39	—	28
Defective Yard Paving	9	—	8
Drainage Faults	165	—	120
Water Supply	37	—	28
Pigsties	11	—	11
Animals Improperly Kept	3	—	3
Smoke Nuisances	17	—	17
Offensive Trades	2	—	2
Other Nuisances	57	—	57
Ice Cream Premises	3	—	2
Vermin Infestations	29	—	29
	2,103	—	1,371

HOUSING STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR, 1948.

1.—Inspection of Dwellinghouses during the year :—

- (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) 736
- (b) Number of Inspections made for the purpose ... 1208
- (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under subhead (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925 713

(b) Number of Inspections made for the purpose ...	1197
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	137
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	377
2.—Remedy of Defects during the year without service of Formal Notices :—	
Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	247
3.—Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :—	
A.—Proceedings under Sections 9, 10 and 16 of the Housing Act, 1936.	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring repairs	10
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of Formal Notices :—	
(a) By Owners	10
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners ...	—
B.—Proceedings under Public Health Acts.	
(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	—
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of Formal Notices :—	
(a) By Owners	—
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners ...	—

C.—Proceedings under Sections 11 and 13 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

(1)	Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	...	...	—
	Undertakings to close houses received	...	...			6
(2)	Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	...	...	—

D.—Proceedings under Section 12 of the Housing Act, 1936 :—

(1)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were made	—
(2)	Number of separate tenements or underground rooms in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the tenement or room having been rendered fit	—

4.—Housing Act, 1936. Part IV. Overcrowding :—

(a)	1.	Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	...	...	...	...	...	21
	2.	Number of families dwelling therein	...	...				30
	3.	Number of persons dwelling therein	..	...				133
(b)		Number of new cases of overcrowding reported during the year	...	...	...	...	...	21
(c)	1.	Number of cases of overcrowding relieved during the year	...	...	...	...		5
	2.	Number of persons concerned in such cases	..					26

Housing.

Building operations of the Council were in progress in four villages, and the position was as follows :—

					In course of Erection.	Completed and Occupied.
Burnhope...	...	...	...	...	24	24
					(pre-fabs).	
Lanchester	...	...	...	...	90	53
Langley Park	...	...	...	...	70	62
					(includes 22 pre-fabs).	
Castleside	...	...	...	...	2	2
					<hr/>	<hr/>
					186	141
					<hr/>	<hr/>

Private building was in operation as follows :—

					In course of Erection.	Completed and Occupied.
Kitswell Road, Lanchester	...	...	...	...	—	1
Ushaw College, Ushaw	...	...	...	...	—	4
Wesley Terrace, Castleside	...	...	...	...	—	3
Fen Hall Farm, Lanchester	...	...	...	...	1	—
					<hr/>	<hr/>
					1	8
					<hr/>	<hr/>

At Langley Park, 2 back-to-back houses at 50 and 50½, Quebec Street, were converted into a self-contained house, in accordance with the policy regarding this type of house, as and when they become vacant and the structure is worthy of the alteration.

Regarding the unfit housing position, some progress was made during the year with the elimination of some of the worst types.

1—3, Stratford Cottages, Greencroft.

Due to the removal of one tenant, and the re-housing of the other two, one by the Council, the structures were demolished and cleared by reason of their dangerous structural condition.

1—14, Happyland Cottages, Greencroft.

Owing to an intimation from the Coal Board that they were going to wreck these houses by mining operations, an Undertaking was given to Close them as vacated.

Four families were re-housed by the Council, four by the Board, and these houses together with two already vacant, were demolished in all or part. The remaining four families will need re-housing somewhere so soon as circumstances permit.

1—20, Dormand's Cottages, Lanchester.

As these houses were gradually being closed by formal Undertaking, following re-housing of the tenants by the Council, a condition was reached when seven houses were vacant, but could not be demolished by reason of the intermittent occupation throughout the street. In August, six families 'squatted' in the vacated houses by forced entry, and thus the occupied position of these houses was returned much to the original situation. By the end of the year, three of the tenants had been re-housed by the Council, and the houses rendered uninhabitable to prevent any further cases of unauthorised occupation.

Housing—General.

Formal Undertakings were given by the respective owners to Close the following properties, as and when they become vacant, due to the structural arrangements and condition of the said properties being below standard and not worthy of retention :—

Mown Meadows, Waskerley.

Bank Foot Cottages, Waskerley.

11—14, Cross Row, Burnhope.

The repairing of property continues to make some progress, generally in two phases. In the case of low-grade property, it is always a slow process, and often basically due to the high cost of repairs, as related to low rental value. With the type of property which should be replaced, there is also the additional attitude that the effort is not worthwhile, in that the materials used, and cost

involved, is an unsatisfactory method of delaying the logical end of such property. With the ownership obligation however of maintaining reasonable repair during occupation, and the shortage of housing accommodation, then the process of keeping such property at least weatherproof, must be persisted in.

At Burnhope, 20 houses in Fell Row had an overhaul to roofs, spouts, external and internal walls, fireplaces, and the living rooms were ceiled. This was a typical example of stop-gap repairs until such time as the houses could be replaced.

At Peartree, 21 houses were completely overhauled following a change of ownership.

Of the houses at Cornsay Colliery which are earmarked for Clearance, some further progress was made during the year with the overhaul of roofs, and although this does not by any means greatly improve the general position, at least it enabled some houses to be kept weatherproof, which hitherto were victims of each rainstorm.

This type of repair was applicable to several other individual houses, but, as new house building eases the nett housing need, it is hoped that the time is not much longer deferred when the clearance of unfit houses can be resumed.

The other aspect of property repairs is a much more pleasing position, and generally is related to property worthy of modernisation. In this field of activity, there has been quite an appreciable amount of work done in overhauling and modernising houses, many of which are owner/occupied. In this category, 23 houses had bathrooms provided by some adaptation ; 5 had hot and cold water supply installed ; 10 had a fitted bath installed ; 6 had a new range with hot and cold water supply, while 16 had the range renewed.

This tendency to improve the amenities on existing conditions is all to be encouraged, in that, steadily house property is brought up to a standard which is desired but could not be enforced.

Civil Building Control.

This work continues to occupy a great deal of time in investigation and checking applications, and sorting out the many problems arising from the cases.

The brief summary of the licensed work is as follows :—

No. of Licences Issued.			Cost of Works.	
For Houses	...	114		£12,736
Other Premises	...	40		£2,186
				<hr/>
Total	...	154	Total ...	£14,922
				<hr/>

Overcrowding.

There still remains a considerable amount of overcrowding in the area, most of it being due to natural family increase, and also the housing of young married people in the home of one of the parents. The post-war building programme of course has helped to ease the situation and continues to do so, but, as stated in last year's report, until a comprehensive survey is undertaken, the true position can not be accurately ascertained.

Tenancy Changes.

In accordance with the routine inspection of prospective Council house tenants and tenancy changes, 232 inspections were carried out during the year, and in ten instances the furnishings had to be treated for vermin infestations before the tenancy change was allowed to be effected.

This check has proved an invaluable means of preventing prospective expenditure on Council property, enables private property cases to be revealed and dealt with, and the moral effect of the inspection is excellent in two ways, according to the case in point ; the mead of praise to the clean householder, and the salutary effect upon the careless type.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

At the beginning of the year, the firm manufacturing cosmetics moved to their new factory premises in Durham Road, Lanchester, from the temporary premises in Kitswell Road. This transfer to a properly designed factory is all to the good in every respect, and especially with regard to the working conditions of the staff.

It is hoped that similar new premises for the clothing manufacturing, at present housed in the temporary structures which

formed the old Smallpox hospital, will soon materialise, since the present premises are gradually proving too small, and not being properly designed for a factory, leave much to be desired.

The old engine sheds at Waskerley used by the Castleside Smelt Mills Company, for burning the dross during the process of recovery of various alloys, were discontinued for such purpose in September, and the process transferred to Castleside.

In the same line of business, another firm comenced a recovery process in the old railway premises at Bank Foot, Waskerley, and later a smelt mill was approved and will be built and commenced this year on the site of the old railway line near Waskerley village.

The composition of the various types of trade on the register at the end of the year was as follows :—

Trade.	With Power.	Without Power.	Total.
Agricultural Contractor ...	1	—	1
Bakeries	2	—	2
Blacksmiths	1	—	1
Benzol Recovery	2	—	2
Boot Repairers	1	2	3
Brick and Pipe Works	1	—	1
Brickworks	1	—	1
Builders Yards	—	5	5
Clothing Manufacture	1	—	1
Cosmetics Manufacture	1	—	1
Ice-Cream Manufacture	2	—	2
Joiners	3	2	5
Motor Repairers	2	9	11
Paint Mixing	—	3	3
Printing	—	1	1
Sausage Makers	9	—	9
Sawmills	3	—	3
Smelt Mills (Alloy)	1	—	1
Smelt Mills (Recovery)	1	1	2
Tailoring	—	2	2
	32	26	58

INSPECTION OF FACTORIES.

Premises.	NUMBER OF :		
	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Occupiers Prosecuted.
Factories	37	5	—
TOTAL ...	37	5	—

DEFECTS FOUND IN FACTORIES.

Particulars	Number of defects.			Prosecutions.
	Found.	Remedied.	Referred to H.M. Inspector.	
Nuisances under the Public Health Acts	.			
Want of Cleanliness	2	1	—	—
Want of Ventilation	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding	—	—	—	—
Want of Drainage of Floors	—	—	—	—
Other Nuisances	1	1	—	—
Sanitary Accommodation				
(a) Insufficient	4	1	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—
Total ...	7	3	—	—

SHOPS ACT.

No formal action was taken in this matter during the year.

Public Cleansing.

In the year under review, the work was carried out without any serious interruptions such as the wintry weather conditions which were experienced in 1947.

The direct labour section appeared to have generally mastered the difficulties peculiar to any particular section and the only feature which caused for comment was certain periodic occurrences of low grade domestic fuel yielding a high and heavy yield of refuse. This feature, and more especially when it is associated with a difficult house access involving many steps, does not auger well for speed of collection, the lasting qualities of the bin, or the physical capacity of the loader.

In the light of experience gained, it was decided to extend the direct labour scheme and orders were placed for two new vehicles for delivery in 1949.

The remaining portion of the district continued to be let as seven contracts, and apart from the Waskerley contract, there was little to complain of. At Waskerley it was found that the contractor was continually neglecting regular collection, so his services were dispensed with and a temporary substitute found. This arrangement however only lasted for a while, and a second change had to be found before assurance was produced that the terms of the contract could be relied upon as being carried out.

There was an increase in the contract price of approximately $3/5\frac{1}{2}$ d. per house, giving an average cost of $23/11\frac{1}{4}$ d. per house.

The direct labour cost as at 31st March, 1949, was $28/2$ d. per house, the difference in average cost of the methods of operation being largely based upon part-time as against full-time employment.

Ash-bin Renewal Scheme.

This scheme of supplying standard bins at approximate cost, to property Owners, continues to be a prompt and easy method of maintaining that refuse bins are in sound and efficient order, and owners continue to make use of the facility.

During the year 43 bins were supplied to properties on the instructions of the Owner.

Code :—

- C. — Complete take.
- G. — $\frac{3}{4}$ take.
- S. — Up to $\frac{1}{4}$ take.

Rats killed—based on estimate of 5 rats per 2 ounces of poison bait taken.

Milk Supply.

The following are the main statistics relating to the area :—

No. of Registered Farms	...	...	...	...	168
No. of Registered Cowsheds	...	...	...	...	214
No. of Farms Registered during year	...	...	...	...	2
No. of Farms discontinued during year	...	...	...	...	—
No. of Producer/wholesalers	...	...	...	...	114
No. of Producer/retailers	...	...	...	...	29
No. of Producer/wholesaler-retailers	...	...	...	...	14
No. of Registered Buttermakers	...	...	...	...	14
No. Registered, but for own use only	...	...	...	...	2

During the year little constructional work to cowsheds was carried out, the principal scheme being a new cowshed at Esh Hall Farm, Esh Village, to house additions to the T.T. herd kept there.

Two farms, Warlands Green and Calf Hall, were restored to the Register for milk production purposes.

Designated Milk Production.

No. of T.T. Producers	...	...	...	...	8
No. of Accredited Producers	...	...	...	...	51
No. of Retailers Licences for Pasteurised Milk	...	...	...	...	3
No. of Supplementary Licences to retail Pasteurised Milk	...	...	...	...	3

Eddis Bridge Farm was licensed during the year for T.T. milk production, thus increasing the number of such licences in the area to 8.

Middles Farm, Rowley, Greenwell Ford and Chiney Hall Farms were approved for Accredited Milk Production, increasing the area total of such licensed premises to 51.

We received for information, 12 milk sample reports from outside authorities, and analysis of the results were as follows :—

Satisfactory	...	...	10
Unsatisfactory	...	2	(1 satisfied the coliform test, but not the methylene blue test).

The majority of the retailed milk supply in the area is now heat treated, apart from three villages in which a certain amount of T.T. milk is retailed, and it would appear that the amount retailed outside these two categories is relatively small, and such amount could it is felt, be reasonably treated at either the Annfield Plain or Stone Bridge heat treatment plants, thus giving the whole area either a T.T. or Pasteurised milk supply.

Meat and Food Inspection.

The Area meat supply continues to be issued from the Consett area slaughterhouse, and the only adverse comment that can be made is that the type of vehicle used for transport, together with the clothing of those engaged in the distribution still falls below the desired hygienic standard.

There is sufficient evidence visible to anyone, that the standard of hygiene now existing in the distribution of foodstuffs generally leaves plenty of room for improvement. If, and so soon as the paper position becomes easier, one of the first matters for attention is a return to the wrapping of bread, which appears to receive most casual treatment for such a prominent commodity.

SCHEDULE OF FOODSTUFFS CONDEMNED AS UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

COMMODITY.	No.	CAUSE.	WEIGHT. (lbs.)
Minced Meat	—	Putrefaction & Fermentation ...	112
Bacon	—	Decomposition, rancid and maggots	29 $\frac{1}{4}$
Tinned Meats	27	Putrefaction & Blown Tins ...	24
Tinned Fish	20	Blown & Leaky Containers ...	14 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tinned Vegetables ...	42	Blown, Punctured & Leaky Tins	45 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tinned Milks	48	Blown, Punctured & Leaky Tins	45 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tinned Marmalade ...	1	Blown Tin	2
Tinned Fruits	5	Leaky Tins	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Dried Fruits	—	Generalised Mould	25
Flour	—	Fusted & Contaminated by Vermin	189
Cereals	4	Mouldy	1
Tea	—	Fusted & Spoiled due to damp ...	28 $\frac{3}{4}$
Sugar	—	Contaminated by Vermin ...	12
Butter	—	Rancid	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Farinoca	—	Fusted	1
Semolina	—	Infested with Mites	86
Dried Egg	1	Sour due to imperfect seal ...	$\frac{1}{4}$
TOTAL ...	148		629 $\frac{3}{4}$

PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

There was a total of 368 notifications of infectious diseases during 1948, compared with 317 in 1947. These figures do not include notification of cases of tuberculosis. Exactly half these notifications were due to measles, whilst scarlet fever and whooping cough accounted for a further 157. This is the highest total of notifications for some years. The following table shows the number of cases notified and the number admitted to an isolation hospital or already in an institution and covers a period of the last ten years :—

	1948		1947		1946		1945		1944		1943		1942		1941		1940		1939	
	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.	Notified.	Admitted to Hospital.
Scarlet Fever ...	90	57	46	39	11	11	6	5	21	18	37	25	37	25	16	16	30	30	5	5
Diphtheria ...	—	—	1	1	5	5	3	3	11	11	14	14	10	9	12	12	5	5	7	7
Erysipelas ...	7	2	9	2	5	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	2	—	3	—
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia ...	—	—	—	—	3	3	1	—	—	—	2	1	1	1	—	—	1	1	2	—
Pneumonia ...	16	2	32	9	9	2	12	3	5	—	8	1	5	—	4	—	3	—	21	—
Dysentery ...	—	—	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	8	—
Enteric & Paratyphoid ...	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Measles ...	184	3	181	3	153	2	76	—	63	—	96	—	23	—	133	—	54	—	3	—
Whooping Cough ...	67	1	40	—	25	—	14	—	7	—	6	—	9	—	22	—	5	—	3	—
Cerebro-Spinal Fever ...	2	1	—	—	2	2	1	1	2	2	—	—	1	1	4	4	2	2	—	—
Polio-Myelitis... ..	—	—	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	330	67	317	59	214	26	116	14	113	33	163	41	55	37	192	32	103	38	52	12

SCARLET FEVER.

Nearly double the number of notifications were received in 1948 compared with 1947, 90 as against 46. Fiftyseven of these cases were removed to isolation hospitals and the remainder treated at home without any untoward results. The cases were generally of a mild type and free from severe complications. There were no deaths.

DIPHTHERIA.

There were 3 notifications of this disease during the year under review, which subsequently turned out to be cases of tonsillitis, so there were no true cases of diphtheria during 1948. This is a very satisfactory state of affairs to record, and credit must be given to the immunised state of the child population. The following table gives the number of cases and deaths since 1932 :—

Year.	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939	1940
Cases Notified ..	16	26	63	48	66	91	60	7	5
Deaths ..	2	4	8	10	5	12	4	—	—

Year.	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	
Cases Notified ..	12	10	14	11	3	5	1	—	
Deaths ..	0	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	

It will be noted that immunisation commenced in 1938 and since that year there has only been 1 death which was in a non-immunised child.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

The National Health Service Act transferred the responsibility for this from the Rural District Council to the local health authority (Durham County Council). The work can now be undertaken by private practitioners as well as public health officers. We have no record of the work done by all private practitioners. So far as we can ascertain the adjusted figures at the end of 1948 were :—

Children under 5 years of age who received two doses of A.P.T. during 1948	169
---	-----	-----	-----

Children between 5 and 15 years of age who received two doses of A.P.T. during 1948	...	19
--	-----	----

In addition 37 children received a reinforcing dose during the year.

The following are the corrected percentages of immunised children in your area at the end of 1948 :—

Under 5 years of age	...	...	...	...	39.1%
5 to 15 years of age	...	...	...	...	69.3%

Strong efforts are being made to increase the percentage in the lower age group.

MEASLES.

This disease was again epidemic during 1948 and 184 cases were notified. This is the third year in succession we have had high notification figures. There was 1 death from this disease and 3 cases were admitted to isolation hospitals because of complications. On the whole the disease appears to have been of a milder type than that experienced last year.

WHOOPING COUGH.

There were 67 cases notified in 1948 compared with 40 last year. There were no deaths and only 1 case was admitted to hospital.

PARA-TYPHOID FEVER.

This was a bottle fed baby which was admitted to Lanchester Isolation hospital and was found to be suffering from para-typhoid

fever. The origin was very obscure but was subsequently thought to be from a 'carrier'—the grandmother. No further cases occurred, and the child made a good recovery.

It will be noted on reference to the 10 year table, that cases also occurred in 1947, 1946 and earlier years which were found to be associated with a colliery canteen, where eventually a 'Carrier' was found on the staff. Steps were taken to avoid a recurrence of this infection.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of new notifications during 1948 was 20. The following table gives the position over the last 10 years :—

Year.	Total Noti- fica- tions.	Pulmonary.	Non- Pulmonary.	Deaths.	Recovered.	Removed from Area.
1939	20	8	12	7	6	3
1940	11	7	4	7	2	—
1941	24	15	9	5	—	2
1942	15	10	5	6	5	4
1943	15	10	5	4	4	7
1944	14	4	10	4	3	2
1945	24	14	10	8	8	3
1946	13	10	3	7	1	5
1947	21	12	9	4	6	5
1948	20	15	5	7	—	1

The state of the register at the beginning of 1939 was 87 pulmonary and 55 non-pulmonary cases, and at the end of 1948 the corresponding figures were 46 and 40.

The housing of tubercular families has received attention in your district for many years, and whilst war conditions have slowed up the process of rehousing, families in bad circumstances are rehoused as and when opportunity presents itself.

